THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTIN (DR. AKHILESH PRASAD SINGH): (a) and (b) The average minimum and maximum retail price of sugar in the four principal markets of the country during the months of January 2004, December 2004 and July 2005 (upto 13th) were Rs. 13.25-16.00, Rs. 17.50-19.00 and Rs. 17.50-20.50 per Kg. respectively.

(c) Huge production of sugar upto 2002-03 and consequent accumulation of sugar stocks resulted in low retail prices, upto 2004. However, subsequent relative increase in prices may be attributed to relative lower production of sugar and higher costs of production.

Decline in Wheat and Rice production

532. SHRI B.K. HARIPRASAD: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Food Corporation of India expects the wheat output to be lower this year by almost 5 million tonnes;

(b) whether Government holds enough buffer stock of wheat and rice for distribution under welfare schemes; and

(c) whether the grain trading community apprehends that the country might return to a situation of 1999 when the Southern States imported wheat as they found it cheaper than moving the stocks from northern wheat producing areas?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (DR. AKHILESH PRASAD SINGH): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) No, Sir.

New Food and Public Distribution Policy

f533. PROF. M.M. AGARWAL: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have formulated a New Food and Public Distribution Policy; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

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† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi,

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (DR. AKHILESH PRASAD SINGH): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

Interests of Wildlife

534. SHRIMATI SUKHBUNS KAUR: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) the decisions taken to protect and reconcile the interests of Wild life with the rights of the tribals in the context of the Scheduled Tribes (Recognition of Forest Rights) Bill; and

(b) the follow-up action taken in the light thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) and (b) The Scheduled Tribes (Recognition of Forest Rights) Bill has been formulated by the Ministry of Tribal Affairs. The Bill is still in the draft stage and no final decision has been taken.

Proposal for Development of Forests in UP

†535. SHRI NAND KISHORE YADAV: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government of Uttar Pradesh has submitted any project proposal to the Central Government for development of forests in the state;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps taken to approve these projects?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) The details are as under:-

(i) Soil and Moisture Conservation, works in Ravine Dominated districts of U.P.:- The project proposal was returned by Department of Economic Affairs, Ministry of